

State Commission

ServeWyoming improves lives and strengthens communities through volunteerism. ServeWyoming oversees a portfolio of six AmeriCorps State programs that address critical needs across Wyoming. In 2014-2015, ServeWyoming supported 200 AmeriCorps members who served in 21 of the 23 Wyoming counties in the areas of education, environmental stewardship, economic opportunity, healthy futures, and capacity building. They taught and mentored 3,200 students and youth with academic and development needs, helped sustain Wyoming's natural resources and public lands, built capacity among 1,800 nonprofits, supported 180 military families, and supported 500 victims of domestic violence including providing financial literacy skills. ServeWyoming also serves as a statewide volunteer center known as Volunteer Wyoming. In 2015, more than 22,939 Wyoming citizens used Volunteer Wyoming through volunteer referrals, service events, matching database, pro bono matches, national days of service, volunteer management trainings, and through six Volunteer Guide resources statewide. ServeWyoming also provides training opportunities to nonprofits in search of strategies for recruiting, placing, managing, and recognizing volunteers.

AmeriCorps State

The mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters is to give children who face adversity strong and enduring professionally-supported one-on-one relationships that can change their lives for the better, forever. The AmeriCorps members who serve with Big Brothers Big Sisters advance this mission. They recruit and support new mentors who can improve the lives of Wyoming's youth. In the past year, the Greater Wyoming Big Brothers Big Sisters' AmeriCorps program created more than 300 mentor/youth matches, and every one of those matches has been sustained for at least six months to one year. This creates opportunities for "Littles" to improve in their education expectations, scholastic competency, attitudes, and academic engagement. AmeriCorps members recruited more than 900 volunteers who donated almost 25,000 hours of their time.

The Teton Science Schools' AmeriCorps program develops service members as educators who build the capacity of local nonprofits and governmental agencies, increase scientific literacy in the community, and address the growing need for a scientifically engaged and literate citizenry. AmeriCorps members in the program have worked with organizations in a variety of ways. They have helped the Teton Science Schools' Teton Research Institute collect data on historic fire regimes in the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem, then used their experience and knowledge of fire ecology to create valuable curriculum resources for field education programs. AmeriCorps members created a "Little People's Market" at the Children's Museum to teach youth about local food and sustainable agriculture. They created activities and curriculum for the Teton Raptor Center to develop citizens' skills in raptor identification. In 2015, AmeriCorps members served 17 Teton County organizations and built more than 55 resources that helped the organizations increase their capacity to serve children and families.

AmeriCorps VISTA

Serving with Campbell County CARE Board in Gillette, AmeriCorps VISTA member Andrica Wall coordinated the planning, facilitating and implementation of the CARE Board's first strategic planning session in more than six years. She developed a board member handbook which is a vital component of their sustainability planning and helped to implement semi-monthly human service agency meetings resulting in a more complete continuum of care for the individuals and families served by these agencies. Wall assisted with the CARE Board's successful Community Services Block Grant funding application. She also helped complete the local annual needs assessment that is geared toward identifying local strengths and weaknesses in the service delivery for low-income and at-risk populations in Campbell County.

AmeriCorps VISTA member Remy Cline served with Lovell, Inc. to develop a food hub in the Big Horn Basin. She wrote a successful \$23,687 specialty crop grant from the State of Wyoming Agriculture Department to provide for the creation of a Resources and Regulatory Guide for Wyoming Specialty Crop Farmers to assist local producers to build sustainable businesses and to make informed decisions when dealing with customers, especially institutions. A significant component of additional research conducted by the AmeriCorps VISTA member unveiled the need for a full engineering study regarding the use of waste heat tapped from the Lovell sugar beet plant to serve a large commercial greenhouse operation. This engineering study was conducted by the University of Wyoming - Building Energy Research Group. Discussions are underway with Western Sugar about developing a Memorandum of Understanding in order to maintain momentum and partnership on this signature project. According to Dave Reetz, executive director of Lovell, Inc., "The good work done so far would not have been possible without VISTA. It will be effectively utilized for the future benefit of low income individuals and low income communities throughout Wyoming."

AmeriCorps NCCC

During the summer of 2015, an AmeriCorps NCCC team was brought into Sheridan to support the local YMCA. The Sheridan County YMCA serves 67 percent of the county as a common community center. The team was asked to serve alongside camp counselors at multiple summer camps in order to provide more attention to campers. The Sheridan County YMCA has limited funding and growing demands on their facilities. AmeriCorps NCCC provided programming support and completed maintenance projects that the YMCA staff may not have been able to complete. Through diligent service, the team was able to provide a great camp experience for the children of Sheridan County and a great camp environment for the children staying at The YMCA Camp of The Bighorns: Camp Roberts.

Late on the evening of June 3rd, 2015, flash flooding hit the communities of Manville, then Lusk. No lives were lost, but roughly 100 homes and businesses were affected, with 35 buildings sustaining major damage or being completely destroyed. An AmeriCorps NCCC team was called in to support the disaster response operation. The team helped manage the Volunteer Reception Center and the donation center. Members coordinated volunteers, collected and distributed food and clothing, and removed debris. Members made themselves available to listen to local residents when they needed to talk about their experience, and shared information about resources that would be beneficial to their specific situations. The AmeriCorps NCCC team played an important role in the rural community's immediate response to the disaster.

Senior Corps Foster Grandparent Program

Foster Grandparent Joan Peters was one of this year's four finalists for the Wyoming Jefferson Award. According to Indian Paintbrush Elementary teachers, the kids don't just see her as helping some students, they see her as an actual grandparent and the glue that holds the school together. Grandma Joan has served for more than 15 years and even has her own school parking spot! The three Foster Grandparent programs in Wyoming cover 17 of the 23 counties. Last year, 196 Foster Grandparents served 152,982 hours with 1,515 children in 72 schools and nonprofit youth organizations. These Foster Grandparents mentored and tutored 895 K-12 students that demonstrated improved academic performance in literacy and/or math, 241 Pre-K students that demonstrated gains in social and/or emotional development, 78 students in after-school programs, and 64 children in domestic violence and homeless shelters. In recognition of the Foster Grandparent Program's 50th Anniversary, Senator John Barrasso wrote, "Every day you and your fellow volunteer grandparents dedicate gifts of time, wisdom, and compassion to our youth. As you guide, educate, and counsel these children, know that you are making important and worthwhile contributions to our state."

Senior Corps RSVP

Stanford University's Chronic Disease Self-Management Program Training will now be implemented in all 50 states, including Wyoming, following a training of RSVP volunteers in Cheyenne. Five of Cheyenne Housing Authority's RSVP volunteers and staff and several community partners including staff from the University of Wyoming completed an extensive 5-day training and became certified as Master Trainers. The trainer RSVP volunteers will each conduct at least two 6-week workshops for the first time in Wyoming, and will train additional RSVP volunteers including volunteers serving with the Natrona County's RSVP in Casper, to conduct trainings and become workshop leaders within their 13 counties and Wind River Indian Reservation service area. The Stanford University CDSMP is an evidence-based program that uses state-of-the-art techniques to help veterans, low-income individuals, seniors and others with chronic conditions address issues related to the management and treatment of their condition, build self-confidence, improve their health status, and reduce their need for more costly medical care.

Senior Corps Senior Companion Program

Last year 95 low-income Senior Companions served 62,371 hours one-on-one with 813 at-risk seniors and individuals with disabilities across the State of Wyoming through 29 nonprofit organizations and agencies. Of those, 50 of the 95 Senior Companions were veterans serving 190 veteran clients, helping to retain their independence and delay use of Medicaid funds for nursing home placement. The average daily cost of care in a nursing home is \$72,635 per year. For those 813 seniors the cost would have been at least \$59 million. The annual cost to operate SCP in Wyoming is \$496,424 including federal funding and local match, meaning the potential costs savings is more than \$58 million. One Senior Companion client wrote, "I truly want to thank you all for this fabulous program. I am 80 years old, don't have a car and am house-bound except for your program. It is a life saver to me, truly. I get to go to the grocery store and pick out my own food; go to the bank; just get out and see people again. I was very depressed before I found out about the Senior Companion. God Bless and please keep on helping us to stay happy and at home".

Social Innovation Fund

The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) transforms lives by using evidence to find what works and make it work for more people. The SIF Classic and SIF Pay for Success programs harness the expertise of grant-making intermediaries to identify, evaluate and expand effective nonprofits serving low-income communities across America. As of September 2015 the John A Hartford Foundation SIF program in Wyoming has served over 450 beneficiaries by providing health services in rural communities, in addition to other achievements. Community Health Center of Central Wyoming provided mental health services 482 beneficiaries. The Social Innovation Fund is investing in expanding the impact on one nonprofit in Wyoming.